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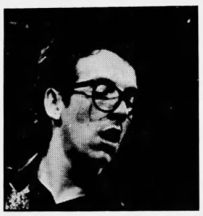

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LETTERS

SEX IN THE MOVIES

I don't object to the love scenes article by Peter H. Brown (Calendar, Dec. 23). I don't even object to movie makers trying to hike their profits by filming those scenes as explicitly as possible—after all, they have to make a buck, just like the rest of us. But I do object when directors like Jane Wagner and Hal Ashby attempt to elevate their hot stuff by discussing it in fulsome phrases such as "trying to express the painful personal conflict that people have about romance today," "doing something very real," "questioning whether or not there is such a thing as love today," "we had to be true to our vision," all Wagnerian utterances. From the non-stop mouth of Ashby: "That feeling of euphoria that comes with the emergence of creative truth," "creating a wonderful and elusive thing," "intellectual beauty," and that most shopworn of contemporary clinches, "making a statement." I have more respect for the honest fly-by-nights who crank out product for the Pussycat theaters.

RAY RUSSELL, Beverly Hills

In the piece on the "Coming Home" love scene director Hal Ashby says, "But make no mistake about it, this is Jane's love scene. The second actress was only used to make people more comfortable."

What people?

Doesn't Ms. Fonda, deep in her feminist heart, feel faintly uneasy about the use of the second actress? If the explicitness of this love scene was so "right," why the "use" of another's body? One would think that, at least, there would have been a screen credit to the effect that "Miss Fonda's breasts and thighs were played by . . ."

KENNETH NELSON, Venice

SOMETHING PERSONAL

As a Mexican-American film maker who worked hard for many years to legitimately make a place for myself in an industry I am today deeply proud to be a part of, I was enraged to read of Jay Bernstein's greedy gouging of Robert Kaufman's next film project, "Nothing Personal" (Ellen Farley on "Hollywood Cozy," Calendar, Dec. 16). Equally reprehensible was Bernstein's casual dismissal of his fee of $150,000 and 5% of the film's profits as "just a token fee." If that's the token fee for what was a non-service, what must all the artist, social workers, nurses and others of the world who really make some contribution think of the motion picture business? May all the Bernsteins of the industry some day have to fall back on the real contributions they've made to the films they've "worked" on—and may all the Robert Kaufmans be there to watch them tumble. Now *that*, Mr. Bernstein, would be funny.

ALEJANDRO GRATTAN, Los Angeles

APOCALYPTIC INJUSTICE

I am shocked and dismayed that Francis Coppola's "Apocalypse Now" was so wrongly overlooked in all categories of the recent L.A. Film Critics' and the New York Film Critics' Circle Awards. It was a masterpiece. Yet none of the actors have won year-end awards of any kind. Martin Sheen was overlooked for best actor to Dustin Hoffman in "Kramer vs. Kramer"! I would like to have seen Hoffman sweat for 11 months in the Philippines, suffer a near-fatal heart attack and turn in the kind of performance Martin Sheen did.

ELLEN RACZ, Norco

See Champlin's discussion of "Apocalypse Now" in his year-end, top 10 picks, Page 1.

SICK OVER GERMS

R. Meltzer's review (Calendar, Dec. 23) of the Germs album was overdosed with impossible comparisons between the real founders of new wave and what the Germs are doing, and that really isn't fair to the general public. Reviewing "The Germs G.I." for its own sake is one thing. However, mixing the good names of Jim Morrison, Iggy Stooge and Lou Reed is to me (and many others) like comparing them with Grand Funk Railroad and all the rest of the grind-out rock 'n' rollers that really have nothing to do with music, showmanship or myths. I just wasted $6.50 on "the album of the year" which I'll never play again.

JUSTIN CLAYTON, Simi Valley

KIND TO 'CARMEN'

My husband and I read Martin Bernheimer's critique of "Carmen" (View, Dec. 5) and we both thought he was unnecessarily severe. Then we watched "Carmen" on TV and decided he had not been severe enough. The worst part was the non-sound track. We haven't had such a good laugh since the time we saw the Marx Bros. in "A Night at the Opera."

IRENE AND HENRY BENDE, Sherman Oaks

IMPORTED RECORDS

I found the article on classical records imports by Joe Saltzman (Calendar, Dec. 9) very interesting. However, he neglected to mention Vogue Records of Westwood, which was by far the best source in the city for imported records, particularly for interesting and unusual repertoire. Now that Vogue is closed, there is no retail outlet which even begins to compare. However, for those willing to obtain their records by mail, there is a firm called Records International (P.O. Box 1140, Goleta, CA 93017) which supplies a marvelous selection of records imported from all around the world. One of its principals is Joe Cooper, who was the import buyer at Vogue.

WILLIAM S. BARTLETT, Simi Valley

CALENDAR

IRV LETOFSKY, Editor

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